

LIBRARY

HELMSLEY

Rural District Council

THE
ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE
MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

FOR THE
RURAL DISTRICT
OF HELMSLEY

FOR THE
Year ending 31st December, 1943

Allenby & Son, Printers, Helmsley.

HELMSLEY
Rural District Council

THE
ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE
MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

FOR THE
RURAL DISTRICT
OF HELMSLEY

FOR THE
Year ending 31st December, 1943



Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2017 with funding from
Wellcome Library

<https://archive.org/details/b29420258>

TO THE Helmsley Rural District Council.

Mr. Chairman, my Lord and Gentlemen,

I have pleasure in submitting my Annual Report as Medical Officer of Health of the Combined District, for the year ending 31st December, 1943.

The Report, by instruction of the Ministry, is again reduced to the barest indication of the Health Conditions of the District during the year. But it gives, in addition to the Sanitary position, the Vital Statistics of the whole District.

The Annual Report of the Sanitary Inspector is included.

SECTION A.

Statistics and Social Conditions of the Area.

Area of Helmsley Union	....	67,705 Acres.
Resident Population in 1943	....	5,432 approx.
Dwellings, structually separate	....	1,189
Sum represented by a Penny Rate	....	£73
Full Rateable Value	....	£18,632

SOCIAL CONDITIONS.

As the War continued the Conditions of Life, here as elsewhere, remained static. Domestic help was practically no longer available; and housewives, especially on the Farms, complained of the dearth of female assistance, due to a rigorous call-up of young women for war-work. Many housewives are suffering from overwork, but there has been no indication of any serious deterioration of health. War weariness was inevitable after four years of constant effort. On the farms there was a marked shortage of male labour, yet with their reduced staffs the farmers faced their difficulties with resolution, and the harvest was completed in good time. Land girls, as in former years, greatly contributed to the increased activity arising out of the War. Food and clothing, though strictly rationed, have been adequate. The standard of the Public Health continues to be high. Nutrition, in the case of Expectant Mothers and children, remained at a satisfactory level. Almost without exception, evacuees from the large centres had returned home. The incidence of infectious Disease was less than in the previous year, and fatalities fewer.

VITAL STATISTICS.

Live Births—	Total 73	Male	Female
Legitimate	....	40	30
Illegitimate	....	1	2
Rate per 1,000 estimated resident population—			14.7
Still Births—	Total 1		
Legitimate	....	0	1
Illegitimate	....	0	0
Rate per 1,000 Live and Still Births—			13.5
Deaths of Infants under 1 year of age—Total 5.			
Legitimate	.....	1	2
Illegitimate	....	0	2
All Infants, per 1,000 Live Births—			68.4
Deaths—All Causes	Total 65.	33	32
Rate per 1,000 estimated Resident population—			10.1
Deaths from Cancer (all ages)		9	
Deaths from Whooping Cough		0	
Deaths from Measles		0	
Deaths from Diarrhœa		0	

SECTION B.

AMBULANCE FACILITIES.

The Ambulances available are as before. The Ryedale Ambulance does the bulk of the work, and is always prompt in conveying cases to Hospitals at York and Scarborough and Malton. There is rarely any delay in the removal of cases. Infectious Diseases were conveyed to Northallerton by the ambulance attached to the Fever Hospital. First Aid Lectures were given at Helmsley to the A.R.P. and Fire Services as well as to the Red Cross Nurses during the year.

NURSING IN THE HOME.

The District Nurses now undertake all Home Nursing instead of the Canon's Garth Sisters. The public is well served by the Nurses who are assiduous in their efforts.

MATERNITY AND MIDWIFERY SERVICE.

The Helmsley and Rievaulx Nurses—both certified Midwives—do the work between them. Cases of child-birth in Beadlam are undertaken by the Nurse at Kirby-moorside, while Harome births are attended by the Midwife resident in Nunnington. Both these Nurses are Certificated Midwives. The work of the Helmsley & Rievaulx Nurses is often arduous in Winter when cases are nursed in the dales and isolated houses on the moors. The duty is invariably carried out with skill and efficiency.

SECTION C.

The general sanitation of the District is, under the present conditions of War, satisfactory. The details I have left to be indicated by the Sanitary Officer in his report.

The Sewage disposal is a difficult problem. The sewerage of Helmsley especially is undoubtedly not ideal. This can be accounted for by some dilapidation of plant and the lack of workmen. The schemes which were contemplated for dealing with sewage disposal have been unavoidably held up by the War. Every effort has been made to prevent anything like a condition of nuisance. Gale Lane again had to be dealt with by the Joint Committee. Under any other circumstances all these shortcomings would have been investigated and corrected. On the whole, your District can compare favourably with other Rural areas in the Riding.

HOUSING.

This matter is dealt with fully by Mr. Tasker. A certain amount of overcrowding was inevitable with the influx of soldiers' families. It was impossible to wholly avoid that. But careful supervision has prevented any serious overcrowding of families, and no lowering of health resulted. Indeed the absence of any epidemic in the District was remarkable.

SECTION E.

MILK SUPPLY.

This is fully dealt with by the Sanitary Officer. Milk is still rationed, and there is a considerable shortage in some parts of the District. But children and invalids get sufficient to maintain health, and the supply, if not liberal, is quite as good as in the towns; and it is of very good quality.

MEAT & OTHER FOODS.

The Meat Supply is strictly rationed. It is quite good and, the supply though restricted, was of good quality. The public are well aware of the reasons for the somewhat meagre rations and cheerfully accept the conditions of supply.

NUTRITION.

This is very satisfactory and there has been a considerable improvement in the quality of Food Substitutes. They are now in great demand and have relieved the scarcity of imported foods consequent upon shipping war work.

WATER SUPPLY.

This was regularly inspected during the year. There was a great increase in consumption due to causes it is not considered advisable to mention. During the late summer and early autumn the Water Supply in some of the outlying villages had been low. But with some ingenuity the period of scarcity was tided over. It is likely that Water Supply will be required in much greater quantity when new sewerage schemes have been undertaken after the war.

SECTION F.

Prevalence of, and Control over, Infectious and other Diseases.

There was a marked increase of Whooping Cough and Measles without a single fatality. No cases of Pneumonia were reported during the year. We had 8 cases of Scarlet Fever and 3 of Diphtheria, with two deaths of Diphtheria in Hospital. There were no cases of Puerperal Fever due to maternity causes. Immunisation for Diphtheria was carried out; the percentage of children immunised was under 5 years, 26 per cent; and over 5 years, 94 per cent.

NOTIFIABLE DISEASES DURING THE YEAR 1943.

	Total Cases Notified	Cases admitted to Hospital	Total Deaths
Scarlet Fever	8	6	0
Whooping Cough	35	0	0
Erysipelas	2	0	0
Diphtheria	3	2	2
Measles	85	0	0
Pneumonia	0	0	0

RIVERS & STREAMS.

These were free from pollution. A case of suspected pollution from the Camp within the entrance to Duncombe Park was investigated and an improvement made in the outlet of the urinal. No further complaints have been made.

SCHOOLS.

All the schools in the Area were regularly inspected during the year.

On February 10th. Ampleforth C. of E. school was closed until the 24th. on account of Influenza and Chicken Pox. Both the Ampleforth schools were then inspected and the sanitation found to be quite satisfactory.

On February 26th. Hawnby school was inspected on account of the condition of the septic tank below the Hotel. There was no nuisance.

On March 16th. a leaking drain at Harome School was inspected. It was put in order without delay.

June 26th. Snilesworth school was closed from June 16th. to June 28th. on account of Whooping Cough. Only three children had attended school before it was closed.

December 19th. Ampleforth R. C. School was closed from December 19th. to January 3rd., 1944, on account of an epidemic of Influenza. The attendance had been considerably affected by the severity of the weather.

CAUSES OF DEATHS IN HELMSLEY R.D. 1943.

		Male	Female
Cerebro-Spinal Fever	....	0	1
Diphtheria	....	1	1
Tuberculosis	....	1	0
Influenza	....	1	1
Cancer of Stomach	....	0	1
Cancer of Breast	....	0	1
Cancer other sites	....	4	3
Diabetes	....	1	2
Intracranial Vascular Lesions	....	0	6
Heart Disease	....	9	4
Other Circulatory Diseases	....	4	4
Bronchitis	....	1	1
Other Respiratory Diseases	....	1	1
Digestive Diseases	....	1	1
Nephritis	....	4	1
Premature Birth	....	0	3
All Other Causes	....	5	1
		33	32

WEATHER REPORT.

This report is abridged from the statistics which were again supplied by Mr Williams, Headmaster of the Helmsley C. of E. school.

RAINFALL.

The total rainfall for the year ending December 31st 1943 was 28.81 inches. During the year 1942 it was 28.54 inches.

January was the wettest month with a rainfall of 4.76 inches. In September we had 4.68 inches. These

were our wettest months. March was the driest month with a record of .46 inch; the next driest month was February, with a rainfall of .66 inch.

Snow fell on 4 days in January, 1 day in February, a slight fall; 2 days in May, 2 in November. There were 3 days of Fog in January, 3 in March, 1 in April, 1 in September, 8 in October, 4 in November, 5 in December.

January and February were cold months, with cold showery weather.

TEMPERATURE

COLD

The temperature fell to record frost on 8 months of the year. January had 15, February 16, March 13, April 3 May 1, October 1, November 18, December 14,—days in which the temperature sank to freezing point or below, sometime in the 24 hours. March 14th. was the coldest day of the year with a temperature of 23 degrees F.—9 degrees of frost with a South wind and early hoar-frost.

WARM.

July and August were our warmest months. June was also a fine month, with a good deal of showery weather at the beginning of the month. July 31st was the warmest day with the temperature rising to 89 degrees F. The last 8 days of the month were warm, with the glass rising and temperature ranging from 79 degrees F. to 89 degrees F. As usual June was the most consistently fine month of the year, although not the warmest.

WINDS.

There was much storm early in January. February was also cold and stormy. There was less wind in November and December than usual, but a good deal of cold fog. Early in the year the wind was for the most part Northerly and North-Easterly in direction. East wind was scarcely experienced throughout the year. During the warm days of July and August the wind was mostly directly from the West.

The year was less variable in weather than usual. We had an open Winter with less snow than in the years immediately preceding. This was conducive to a good standard of public health; and the Catarrhs seen in the early months of former years were less prominent. Thus Pneumonia was not notified by any Doctor practising in the District.

For England and Wales the Birth Rate per 1,000 of the civilian population was 15.8, and the Death Rate from all causes 15.3. In your District the figures were : Birth Rate 14.7, and Death Rate 10.1.

In conclusion, I wish to thank your Council and its Officers for assistance and support and to record my appreciation of the unfailing courtesy of my professional colleagues in the course of carrying out my duties.

I have the honour to be,

Your obedient servant,

ALEXANDER C. BLAIR, M.D.

Annual Report of the Sanitary Inspector for the year 1943

To the Chairman and Members of the
Helmsley Rural District Council.

Mr. Chairman and Gentlemen,

I have the honour to present to you the second Annual Report of the sanitary work carried out by your Sanitary Inspector during the year ended 31st December, 1943.

The total number of inspections made during the year for all purposes was 988, a summary of which is given hereunder :—

Housing Inspections	....	....	185
Drainage and Sewerage Inspections	....	....	124
Visits re Water Supplies	....	....	156
Helmsley & Oswaldkirk Sewerage Farms	....	....	94
Public Cleansing	....	....	89
Inspections of Food Shops	....	....	40
Inspections under the Milk and Dairies Orders			87
Inspections under the Factory & Workshops Acts			16
Inspections of Gilling & Ampleforth Sewerage Works			31
Salvage	....	....	136
Miscellaneous	....	....	30
			988

HOUSING

The following defects in Council Houses were remedied during the year, viz.—

New closet pans provided	....	....	6
Repairs to W. C.	....	....	4
New Handbasins installed	....	....	2
Repairs to ranges and fireplaces	....	....	27
Repairs to handbasins	....	....	2
Repairs to roofs	....	....	30
Plumbing repairs	....	....	43
Repairs to walls, ceilings and paintworks			8
Repairs to doors	....	....	8
Repairs to floors	....	....	3
New coppers installed	....	....	2
Glazing	....	....	3

In three houses considerable improvement in cases of smoking chimneys was effected by the installation of cowls and soot-boxes.

MILK SUPPLY.

There are 175 cowkeepers, producers and wholesale and retail traders of milk on the register. Five cowkeepers were registered during the year. 87 Inspections of cowsheds have been made and as a result of these, a considerable general improvement has been made in the standard of cleanliness of the cowsheds.

During the year Inspectors of the War Agricultural Executive Committee have been making systematic inspections of all milk supplies and cowsheds and have in general taken over the inspection of wholesale traders' premises.

WATER SUPPLIES.

One hundred and fifty six inspections were carried out. It must be emphasised that all our Supplies have now reached their maximum supply and that the post-war development of Sewerage schemes and the general increase in piped supplies to consumers in the district, plus the installation of milk coolers, make it essential that the water supplies are augmented to meet these demands.

The supply at Sproxton gave cause for considerable anxiety during the months of September, October and part of December, when several farms and houses in the village were without water for a considerable time.

With the exception of Sproxton and the village of Old Byland, the remainder of the parish supplies were satisfactory.

The Helmsley and Kirbymoorside Joint Water Supply keeps the lower villages of Beadlam, Nawton, Wombledon, Harome and Pockley supplied, but difficulty is still being experienced in supplying the High Farms on Skiplam Rigg. When Sewerage systems are laid down in these villages, this supply will have to be improved by bringing in additional sources of water.

PUBLIC CLEANSING

During the year the Refuse collection has proceeded in a satisfactory manner. Each parish is visited once a fortnight by the Council's refuse collection vehicle. In addition three ashpits were emptied.

The central tip at Helmsley is in a good sanitary condition. During the year extensive rat extermination measures have been carried out at Helmsley & Ampleforth refuse tips, the methods used have been cyanide gas, poisons and trapping. Good results have been obtained.

SEWERAGE AND DRAINAGE

The Sewerage works at Helmsley and Oswaldkirk are working satisfactorily though the Helmsley works are somewhat overloaded. Ninety four visits have been made to these. An additional one hundred and twenty four visits have been made on Drainage and sewerage.

SUMMARY OF WORK.

Septic tanks cleansed	....	....	4
Blocked drains cleared	....	....	16
Blocked sewers repaired	....	....	6
Beds cleansed	....	....	2
Open sewers cleansed	....	....	4

SALVAGE

This has proceeded in a very satisfactory manner and has been greatly assisted by the excellent co-operation of the Women's Voluntary Service whose members organise collections in the majority of the parishes. These collections are gathered once a month in a special trailer during the routine refuse collection.

During the year the salvage collected and disposed of is as follows :—

Paper	37 $\frac{1}{4}$ Tons
Metal	63 $\frac{1}{2}$ Tons
Textiles	1 $\frac{3}{4}$ Tons
Bones	1 $\frac{1}{4}$ Tons
Rubber	1 $\frac{3}{4}$ Tons

CONCLUSION.

I would like to take this opportunity of expressing my appreciation to the Council for the consideration and support given to me during the year, also to the Medical Officer of Health, Dr. A. C. Blair, and the Clerk to the Council, Mr. C. France, for the interest and valuable advice they have given me in connection with my duties.

I am, Gentleman,

Your obedient servant

GEORGE F. TASKER.

Sanitary Inspector.

